



Health Department

John O. Norquist
Mayor

Seth L. Foldy, MD
Commissioner of Health

Bevan K. Baker, CHE
Health Operations Director

Administration



Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact: Bevan Baker, Health Operations Director, pager: 318-5711

Fifth Human West Nile Virus Case in Milwaukee County
State Department of Health Reports Twenty Total Cases Statewide

The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) received notification from the State Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) today of the fifth probable human case of West Nile (WN) virus in Milwaukee County. The infected individual is a 53 year-old city of Milwaukee man that was hospitalized for two days under supportive care and has since been released. No further information regarding the identity or other personal information of the patient or his medical care will be released at this time by the Milwaukee Health Department.

WN virus is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes acquire the infection when they bite birds carrying the disease. Only one mosquito pool out of over 775 collected in Milwaukee County has tested positive for WN virus this year. The MHD has received over 2400 dead bird reports in 2002. The numbers of reports received has been declining since a peak in early to mid August. The City of Milwaukee has applied mosquito larvicide to over 22,000 catch basins and Milwaukee County is in the process of treating ponds and lagoons to help control mosquito populations.

The State DHFS has reported 20 human cases of West Nile Virus in Wisconsin so far in 2002. To avoid West Nile virus infection in areas where the virus has been detected in birds or other animals, public health officials recommend the following:

- Use mosquito repellant containing DEET when outdoors during peak periods of mosquito activity between dusk and dawn
- Wear long sleeve shirt and long pants when outdoors during peak mosquito activity
- Repair screening of door and windows which may provide unwanted entry of mosquitoes
- Eliminate areas of standing or stagnant water in and around the home (flower pots, buckets, cans, clogged rain gutters, wading pools, bird baths, tires, etc.)

For more information on West Nile virus call the City of Milwaukee Health Department at 286-3521 or call the State Department of Health and Family Services West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-800-433-1610.

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